Jaworski: A Nixon Indictment Could Have Barred Aides' Trial

Post 11-26-76

Former Watergate Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski says that if former President Richard M. Nixon had been indicated before President Ford pardoned him, there never would have been a trial of Nixon aides H. R. Haldeman, John Mitchell and John Ehrlichman.

All three were convicted of conspiring to obstruct justice as well as other felonies in connection with the Watergate cover-up.

In an interview recorded for broadcast today on public television, Jaworski said he was waiting for a jury to be sequestered in the trial of Nixon's aides before he passed on to the Watergate jury the question of whether to indict Nixon.

Before jury selection was completed, however, Ford issued his pardon.

Had Nixon been indicted before the jury was sequestered, Jaworski said, "we would have lost out on the cover-up case, and we could not have tried it because we would have had to agree to at least a year's continuance because of all the publicity."

He did not explain why, but he may have been referring to the possibility that the defendants then could have argued they were being denied their right to a speedy trial.